# **Environmental Law Reform**

# **Letters to the Editors**

# **Guideline and Template**

Dear Nature Canada Members:

Letters to Editors are an excellent way to encourage and promote discussion of nature topics you are passionate about. A Letter to the Editor can help create awareness about an important issue and help to influence public opinion.

Publishing a Letter to the Editor is not a simple process. Most editors of publications receive up to 300- 500 letter submissions daily.

You can significantly improve your chances of having your letter published by following these guidelines.

**Letters to the Editor Guidelines**

* A timely letter will be more likely to be chosen for publication. It is best to respond within seven days to a particular article or news event that was published by the newspaper.
* Try to make the letter concrete if you are commenting on a national issue, highlight the national significance and try to link it to a recent event or article that discusses the issue.
* If you are responding to a community event or issue, your local (community) newspaper is the best publication to submit your letter to.
* Be concise, try to keep letters to fewer than 150 words. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.
* Send letters by e-mail and include the contents of the letter in the body of the e-mail message as plain text only. Do not use Microsoft Word format or rich text format (RTF).
* Do not send letters as an attachment.
* Ensure you include your name, address and daytime phone number.

***Environmental Law Reform***

**Letters to the Editor**

**Template:**

*Insert the Name of Media Outlet or Publication*

*Attention: Editor*

*Address*

*City, Postal Code*

Dear Editor:

Re: [*State your reason for writing your letter right at the beginning*. *If you are responding to articles or editorials by the media, use the first sentence to reference the title or topic (such as declining monarch butterflies) of the article, name of the author or source (e.g., Globe and Mail), and the date it was published*. *Example response to articles or editorial introduction.]*

* In your Aug. 14 article [insert article title], columnist [insert name of reporter/columnist] states [insert main point of article].
* The federal government’s recent decision to reform and modernize the *Canadian* *Environmental Assessment Act* is good news for Canadian nature supporters. A modern approach, with the best science, is needed to ensure that Canada effectively protects the natural environment and the health of Canadians.

[*If you responding to a current issue, state that you are responding to the issue and where the issue is being addressed*. *Example issue introduction. State your points here. Include facts, references, or research here to establish credibility. Keep length in mind.]*

* Canada will be able to rebuild better environmental laws to conserve nature and promote sustainability.
* The federal government’s recent decision to review the processes used to decide which natural resource development projects will be approved or rejected is good news for Canadians.
* This represents the best opportunity in a generation for reform of federal laws that govern development of potentially harmful projects and activities including pipelines, as well as laws protecting fish habitat and Canada’s navigable waters.

[*Include a call to action, asking readers to follow up with some activity, such as joining in calling on policymakers to address the issue.]*

* We need to ensure the federal government works with the provinces, Indigenous Peoples, and stakeholders to:
  + Review the regressive changes made by the previous government, and restore lost protections and incorporate modern safeguards to our environmental laws.
  + Establish comprehensive, timely, and fair processes to assess the sustainability of proposed development projects and government policies, including their cumulative and climate change effects, and allows the public opportunities to meaningfully participate in these processes.
  + Ensure the government engages Indigenous Peoples in project assessments on a nation-to-nation basis.
  + Reinstate protection of fish habitat into the Fisheries Act to incorporate more modern safeguards.
  + Reinstate protection of navigable waters into the Navigation Protection Act and include more modern safeguards.

[*End with a strong, positive statement in support of your case*]

* For Canada’s 150th birthday, let’s ask our federal government for better laws to conserve nature and promote sustainability.
* Please go to [Nature Canada’s website](http://naturecanada.ca/) to find out more about conserving nature and how you can help.

Sincerely,

Signature

Name of Writer